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To-day I am in considerable haste, but would not lose a post in answering you about the letter you speak of. I quite forget what was in the letter in question, but do not doubt it would be some transcript of my then feelings about the matter on hand; part of the truth, therefore, and I hope not of the untruth, in regard to it: and I will very willingly commit it altogether to your friendly discretion, to make whatever use of it you find to be reasonable and feasible; and so will say, Long life to Franklin's memory! and add our little shout to that of the Bostoners in inaugurating their monument for him. "Long life to the memory of all brave men!" — to which prayer, if we could add only, "Speedy death to the memory of all who were not so!" it would be a comprehensive petition, and of salutary tendencies, in the epoch Barnum and Hudson.

I will not take up your time, Mr. President, at this advanced hour, by a more detailed description of this ancient and interesting document. Mr. Wake has facilitated the use of it by marking with a pencil the passages where the name of Franklin occurs. I feel gratified that it has fallen to my lot on this occasion, when we are taking formal possession of Mr. Dowse's magnificent library, to have it in my power to make the first offering to the Society after that happy event; and that this offering should be an original manuscript volume, possessing some antiquarian interest in connection with the family of the great man whose merit was so fully appreciated by Mr. Dowse, and to whose memory, among the last acts of his life, he erected a monument, in granite, near his own last resting-place at Mount Auburn.

SPECIAL MEETING, April 30.

A special meeting of the Society, called by the Standing Committee, was held at the house of William Brigham, Esq., 1061, Washington Street, Boston, on Thursday evening, April 30, at seven and a half o'clock.

The Corresponding Secretary read a letter from the Rev. W. B. SPRAGUE, D.D., of Albany, N.Y., accepting his election as a Corresponding Member.

Dr. ROBBINS, on behalf of the Committee on the By-laws, asked and obtained leave of the Society to report in print at the next stated meeting.

The same gentleman reported a set of temporary By-laws for the Dowse Library, to be in force until a proper system of rules and regulations shall be agreed upon by the Society; which, having been read, were unanimously adopted. They are as follows: —

RULES FOR THE DOWSE LIBRARY.

1. The room in which the books are deposited, which were presented to the Society by the late Thomas Dowse, shall be known as the Dowse Library of the Massachusetts Historical Society.

2. No book shall be taken out of the room.

3. Books may be used in the room by members of the Society, and by others introduced by them in person; but no book shall be taken from the cases except by members, or by the Assistant Librarian, who shall cause each book to be returned to its proper place immediately after it has been used.

4. Meetings of the Society may be held in the Dowse Library at the discretion of the Standing Committee; but the room shall never be opened for the meeting of any other association.

Voted, That authority be given to the Standing Committee to address a circular to all the members of the Society, with a view of securing additional contributions to the library, and especially of procuring as many as

possible of the publications of the past and present members.

Interesting conversations were held upon subjects suggested by several valuable donations made to the Society by members present at the meeting.

The President presented a letter from Benjamin Franklin, with his autograph signature, addressed to James Bowdoin, Governor of Massachusetts, of which the following is a copy: —

IN COUNCIL, PHILADELPHIA, 23d March, 1787.

SIR, — I have the honor of enclosing a copy of an Act of the Legislature of this Commonwealth, and a Proclamation of the Council, founded upon your Excellency's letter of the 10th of Feb'y. I am, sir, with much respect,

Your Excellency's most obedient servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

His Excellency, JAMES BOWDOIN, Esquire, Governor of Massachusetts.

The Proclamation referred to in the letter was as follows: —

[L. S.] B. FRANKLIN. } PENNSYLVANIA, *ss.* — By the President and Supreme Executive Council of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

A PROCLAMATION.

Whereas the General Assembly of this Commonwealth, by a law entituled "An 'Act for co-operating with the State of Massachusetts Bay, agreeable to the Articles of Confederation, in the apprehending of the proclaimed rebels, Daniel Shays, Luke Day, Adam Wheeler, and Eli Parsons,'" have enacted, "that rewards additional to those offered and promised to be paid by the State of Massachusetts Bay, for the apprehending the aforesaid rebels, be offered by this State," — we do hereby

offer the following rewards to any person or persons who shall, within the limits of this State, apprehend the rebels aforesaid, and secure them in the jail of the city and county of Philadelphia: viz., for the apprehending of the said Daniel Shays, and securing him as aforesaid, the reward of one hundred and fifty pounds lawful money of the State of Massachusetts Bay, and one hundred pounds lawful money of this State; and for the apprehending the said Luke Day, Adam Wheeler, and Eli Parsons, and securing them as aforesaid, the reward (respectively) of one hundred pounds lawful money of Massachusetts Bay, and fifty pounds lawful money of this State. And all judges, justices, sheriffs, and constables are hereby strictly enjoined and required to make diligent search and enquiry after, and to use their utmost endeavours to apprehend and secure, the said Daniel Shays, Luke Day, Adam Wheeler, and Eli Parsons, their aiders, abettors, and comforters, and every of them, so that they may be dealt with according to law.

Given in Council, under the hand of the President and the seal of the State, at Philadelphia, this tenth day of March, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-seven.

Attest, JOHN ARMSTRONG, JR., *Sec'y.*

God save the Commonwealth!

Mr. WINTHROP also exhibited the original conveyance of Hicham Woods by Sir Wm. Forth to Sir Edward Coke, bearing date 28th March, 1610.

The President also offered for the inspection of the members the original order issued by General Gage for permission to be granted to the inhabitants of Boston to cross the lines, dated Boston, 27th April, 1775.

Mr. SAVAGE presented one of the original "passes" given in accordance with General Gage's order, of which the following is a copy: —

Boston, May , 1775.

Permit Margarett Jepson, together with his [her] Family, consisting of Seven Persons and their Efects, to pass over the Line between Sunrise and Sunset.

By order of his Excellency the Governor.

To the Field Officer in the Lines.

No Arms nor Ammunition is allowed to pass, nor Merchandize.

Mr. Savage also gave to the Society an autograph letter of James Otis, written in 1758, and a document containing the names of the people at Gay Head in 1792.

Mr. Brigham offered for acceptance a number of the "Royal American Magazine" for June, 1774; and "A Select Catalogue of Books in the College Library at Cambridge, for the more frequent use of the under-graduates," printed at Boston in 1773.

Mr. Warren presented a pamphlet entitled "Notices of the Last Great Plague, 1665–6, from the Letters of John Allin, formerly Vicar of Rye, Sussex." Also the "Annual Register" from 1764 to 1784.

Mr. Warren also exhibited and read extracts from a rare volume, entitled "The World's Hydrographical Discription," written by John Davis, the celebrated English navigator, who discovered Davis's Straits in 1585. The book was printed at London in 1595. It relates to his reason for expecting to find a "speedie passage" into the South Seas, to China and India, by northerly navigation.

Dr. Robbins presented to the Society a "Manuscript Diary," by Michael Wigglesworth, for the years 1653 to 1657, inclusive.